Otto Schneid
Papers

317

Dearter.
17. I.

7. Januar 1930
Paris XVIII.
89 rue Caulaincourt

Sehr geehrter Herr

ich danke Ihnen für Ihre Einladung
Ihnen an der Jearleitung des Künstler-
Lexikons - was meine Künstler-Leistung wenigstens
anbelangt - irgendwie an die Hand zu
gehen. Ich glaube, dass Sie aus dem
Buch von Florent Fels über mich ziemlich
informiert sein werden - ich möchte nur
noch mein Schutzdatum:
2. Mai 1880 hinzufügen.

Sie hochachtend ergebener

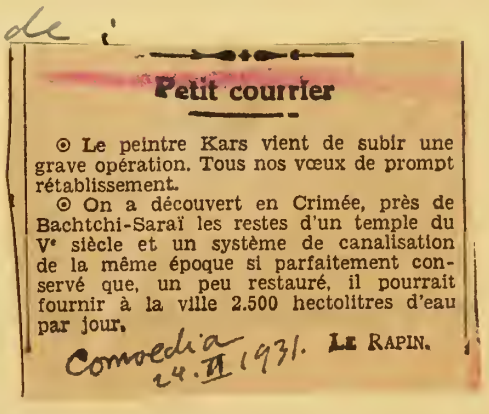
Gergekars.

Bellevue (S. et O.)
11 rue Ernest Renan
Pensions „les Balyssis"
13. Juli 1931.

Sehr verehrter Herr Doktor

vor mir liegt ein freundliches Brief von Ihnen vom 15. VI. in dem Sie mich nach meinem Befinden vor Ihrer Abreise von Paris noch gekundigen. Ich danke Ihnen sehr höflich für diese Aufmerksamkeit.

Sie waren bei uns am 6. Juni. Ich hatte es in meinem vornehmlich notiert, es steht da kurz „Schneid". Weit entfernt Ihren Namen in einen ursächlichen Zusammenhang mit den Ereignissen dieses (obenliegenden) Tages zu bringen — muss ich Ihnen leuchten dass ich mich gegen 7 h abend dieses Tages schnell entschliessen (tatsächlich) musste dass „Geschmetter" werde:



**Petit courrier**

⊙ Le peintre Kars vient de subir une grave opération. Tous nos vœux de prompt rétablissement.

⊙ On a découvert en Crimée, près de Bachtchi-Saraï les restes d'un temple du Vᵉ siècle et un système de canalisation de la même époque si parfaitement conservé que, un peu restauré, il pourrait fournir à la ville 2.500 hectolitres d'eau par jour.

Comoedia 24. VI 1931. LE RAPIN.

Wir sind seither 5 Wochen

der Verlauf meiner Gallenblasenoperation war absolut günstig - aber die Reconvalescenz nach diesem schweren Eingriff dürfte wohl noch Wochen fest in Anspruch nehmen. Die Pflege meiner L. Frau und [redacted] der sonnigen Zimmer einer ruhigen Familien pension versichern sich schon wund müd - und vermissen mich - jeder Weise - so hoffe ich doch wenigstens bald wieder zur Arbeit soweit komme zu können.

Nochmals besten Dank und sehr freundschaftliche Grüsse an Sie und von meiner Frau

Ihr Georg Kaus.

P.S. Die Ihnen vom Schauinsland Ereignisse nach dem 6. Juni erklären Ihnen auch - kann - wider auch zu unserem grossen Bedauern Ihre Telegr. Anrufe in der rue Cavalcmont unerhört geblieben sind. d.O.

Pologne

Monsieur
Dr. otto Schmela

Bielsko

Mickiewicza 41.

Mme. Kan
Belleme (S. et O.)
11 rue Ernest Renan.

KARS

In the works of Kars which characterize him best the ideal of harmony seems to be perfectly realized. It is the harmony of the represented phenomenon with its aesthetic form, that of line with color, of surface with mass and space. Within this harmony the virtual presence of one leading idea is felt, that of greatness, of monumentality. The very volumen of bodies and of entire landscapes is treated with a tenderness, with a cult, sometimes recalling early Flemish masters. Is Kars likeweise natural and naive, is his creative process as primary as theirs ?

We find the answer in some meaningful facts. This spirit of adoration of physical power dwelt in a delicate and even weakly body, the worshipper of Beauty was himself mysteriously ugly. So his art would rather be the outcome of a personality which overcomes itself, finding in the work its own antithsis which is perfection and happiness.

Georges Kars (Karpeles),also the son of a miller, born 1880 in the village Kralupy near Prague, had a peaceful or even idyllic youth. He studied first at the a secondary school in Prague and at a private art school in Munich; after two years Franz von Stuck admitted him to the Academy. Until 1905 he was his student, though French impressionists attracted the young artist more. At the first opportunity he went to Paris, afterwards to Spain. There he studied nature, mainly a on the sea shore, and copied admired masters like Velasquez and Goya, while his friendship with the cubistic painter Juan Gris seems not to have influenced his art. Later, as a resident of Paris, he still spent many summers in Spain.

To Prague too he returned often: "Also in the spirit of some young artists of Prague a revolution broke out. However, I was stronger impressed by it in Paris where Matisse and Picasso worked." It should be noted

that in Paris too he always worked closely to Nature, out of faithful Love of Life. Florent Fels divided the development of Kars into three periods: One of mere impressionism, until 1908; a second, until 1914, of a rather analytical conception of form by stronger means of expression; and his third, when he strove to objective form, by both line and color, subordinating his personal feeling to control of Nature.

At the time of all these efforts which required the man in his entirety, not much of the happiness of his childhood had been left. May be that a few echoes of it still enabled him to overcome dangerous complexes and singular crises. When I came on a summerday of 1931 to visit him in his home on the Montmartre he was bedridden and had to be operated the other day. With wishes for his health I wanted to go. But Mrs. Kars invited me to stay, and her invitation was so convincingly sincere that I accepted,and we spoke much and exclusively about him. She distinguished me by great confidence and told me on this deep man things which I wouldn't publish if he were still alive. Today, however, I am obliged to do so. Once, inmidst unusual successess, he came home in visible depression and declared to his wife that he have not the slightest talent and would not longer cheat people and himself. Even she (who looked as if she were his embodied ideal of abundance and was highly educated, motherly and devoted) was not able to get him out of this dejection. In spite of his physical weakness he hastened to become a guard of a factory - until the crisis passed over.

Besides this incident he possessed most logical judgement. He was a faithful friend and did much for other artists.

At the time of War and Disaster he found refuges near Lyon and within this city, then, in December 1942, he reached Switzerland. Atwo years creative efforts still strengthened and comforted him, until full knowledge brought him into borderless despair. Finally he had learned that of all his

numerous chechoslovakian relatives no one had remained alive. When the defeat of Nazi-Germany was close and the survivors were full of new hope, on February 5, 1945, Georges Kars took his life. His sufferings and his unwillingness to outlive the Catastrophe were his share in the Jewish martyrdom.

Since 1909 he had exhibited in Paris, first in the Salon d' Automne, since 1913 with the Indépendants, after 1922 in the Salon des Tuileries. His drawings were shown 1922 in La Licorne Gallery, 1928 in that of Bernier. In the same year an exhibit of his paintings was arranged in the Berthe Weill Gallery. He was also represented in international exhibitions; in London (Royal Gallery), Tokyo (1926), Geneva (and Bordeau (1927), Vienna (1930), finally in Amsterdam. Even inmidst the German time his friends took care of two semi-public shows in Lyon. The most impressive one was doubtless the memorial exhibition which Paris saw late in 1945.

Before World War II drawings of the artist were acquired by the Albertina, and Vienna, the Graphic Collection of Mannheim, while some of his paintings are in the museums of Prague, Grenoble and Lyon. The Vienna Museum of Modern Art had however, also bought one painting. It is doubtful, whether any one of the artist's works which the German museums of Hamburg, Hannover, Elberfeld, Wiesbaden and Cologne had possessed still exists. Before 1939 many private collections too were enriched by works of Kars, e.g. that of Eugène de Rothschild, Paris.

Among the authors who wrote about the artist were Florent Fels (G. K./, Edition Triangle, Paris); Hans Tietze (in "Die Bildenden Kuenste", Vienna 1919/ and in "Kunst und Kuenstler", Berlin 1929); Josef Kalmer (in "Das Zelt", Vienna 1924); Andre Salmon (in "La Revue de France", Paris 1928); Oskar Schuerer (in "Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration", Darmstadt 1928 and 1930); Nino Frank (in "L' Art Vivant", Paris 1929); Aurelie Gottlieb (in "Menorah", Vienna 1932). Apropos of the mentioned memorial show Jacques de Lepard, Claude Roger Marx, Raymond Cogniat and other Parisian critics celebrated our master. May be, however, that the future / will still much add to his appreciation.